

BENOIT! KOBASHI! TAEU! DiBIASE! BUZZ SAWYER! and other stuff I've seen and heard so far this week!

Howdy!

I'm a do these every three days or so, so they don't get too unweildy (or something spelled similar to that).

- I just saw the Kenta Kobashi/Akira Taue match on tape (God bless Phil!) with the Triple Crown title switch and all I can say is: DANG! What a great match! Kenta was so intense and Taue was the best I had ever seen him. The best part is at the end when Kobashi pins him (68 near falls later) and the shocked crowd rushes the ring. The only bad part is that now that I'm finally taking a shine to Taue, he's no longer champion and will probably never be again. Kobashi is a wrestling machine and this was a great example of it, as he stretched the boundaries of the All Japan style with cool spots over the top rope (especially the guillotine legdrop over the top to the floor onto Taue's head) but always stayed within the allotted framework of the style. Everybody should study how the highspots were set up, especially how long they set up the spinning DDT by Kobashi. Taue teases a toprope chokeslam all match and finally sets Kenta on the turnbuckle and gets set to finally unleash it. The DDT is a counter to the Taue finisher and it made absolutely perfect sense when Kobashi nails it (I give it 4 Guerreros). Sometimes I forget that All Japan is the greatest thing you can watch if your in the mood to pay really close attention to a match and figure out the sublties and nuances. Luckily the dogs were asleep, my wife was cross-stitching and I was in the mood for the long haul that is a great All Japan match. You need to set aside a lot of time and pay close attention, but by the end the payoff is always there (this is getting a little creepy. Sorry.) This match is a textbook example of how good a match should be when you crown a new champion.

Also on the tape is a Jun Akyama/Misawa va Akira Taue/Kawada match. This was a pretty basic premise of Akayama and Misawa taking turns getting the crap beaten out of them. Akira does that beautiful running kick to the head a couple of times and you just know it has to suck to be on the recieving end of that. The other highlights were: Taue doing the world's fattest tope onto Misawa; Kawada with the brilliant attempt to no-sell Akayama's Exploder suplex but falling into the ropes after trying to bounce right up (this was set up by Akayama attempting to nosell the little kicks thing that Kawada does, but after the first nosell, Kawada does it again and finishes it off by punting Akayama's face across the mat). The more I see of Kobashi, Akayama, and Taue, the more I want to see them more than Misawa and Kawada. I figured Akayama would always do the job in these type of matches but that would be giving away the ending.

- I saw a couple of hours of Mid South from 1986 and it was pretty beautiful. The great thing is that Bill Watts was such a terrifying booker that he scared Duggan into having a semblance of workrate. Ted DiBiase was the cornerstone of that promotion and you can tell what he instilled in the guys that paid attention to him, especially Steve Williams and Terry Taylor. That no bullshit style was what American wrestling should be by now; but other promotions had the spotlight and by the time Ted got there it was too late. Ted Dibiase and Steve Williams vs Al Perez and Wendell Cooley was a blueprint of how to pace a match, instill psychology, get a lesser

opponent over, and still keep your heel heat. Also sticking out on the tape are all the matches involving the Fantastics. After watching these guys against Slater and Sawyer here and Williams and Sullivan in NWA, and seeing them live a jillion times at the Richmond Coliseum, I would have to say that these guys were the most overlooked wrestlers in the 80's. I'm guessing they went to All Japan because their Mid South style fit in perfectly. I can imagine that their idiot gimmick ruined them in the eyes of most wrestling fans but both these guys could go. Of course, I was glad that there is plenty of Dick Murdock in his prime, giving interviews and putting on a hell of a match against Butch Reed, including the Murdock dropkick, which always impressed me about the big man. And the absolutely greatest thing is whole MidSouth idea of hard wrestling, clean pinfalls, getting over moves, Redneck angles, loud interviews and everybody working their asses off if they wanted to keep their jobs. A minor note is that every announcer, including Bill Watts, called a suplex a suplay. And Heyman must have studied these tapes like a bible.

- I watched Chris Benoit vs Too Cold Scorpio from SuperBrawl 3 and it was exquisite for the most part. Benoit is four times the wrestler now than he was then, and he is twice the wrestler there then when he was in Stampede, so next year he should disappear in a blinding light of wrestling perfection.:) Scorpio was flashier then than now, but he wasn't nearly as complete of a wrestler then as he is now. I'm thinking that Benoit has the record of most Timelimit draws that don't end in Timelimit draws in ratio to how many pay per veiws he has appeared in. I need an aspirin now. What was the story behind his first stint in WCW. All I can remember is him saying in an interveiw in I think late 94 that he had no anamosity towards anyone there.

I must finish off the Michinoku Pro, the Guerrero-Malenko matches and Ladder match section of the Phil tapes and watch Scott's "Flair in Japan" tape and the NJ Junior tag tournament tape and the other tape he sent me and I'll fill y'all in Thursday. Super Calo is official for Fall Brawl and I'm STOKED!

NANIWA~!

- Dean Rasmussen, Juventudiac!